

South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority  
90 Sargent Drive, New Haven, Connecticut 06511-5966 203-562-4020  
<http://www.rwater.com>

## Testimony to the Commerce Committee

### **Senate Bill 121, An Act Concerning the Provision of Development Services to Regional Economic Development Districts and the Authority to Pursue Economic Development Strategies**

March 13, 2012

*The South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (SCCRWA) is a non-profit, public corporation and political subdivision of the State. Our mission is to provide our customers with high quality water at a reasonable cost while promoting the preservation of watershed land and aquifers. We provide approximately 50 million gallons of water per day to an estimated 430,000 consumers in our region. The source of this water is a system of watershed and aquifer areas that cover about 120 square miles within 24 municipalities. More than 27,000 acres of these watershed and aquifer areas are protected as open space as a result of the Authority's efforts and efforts with partners. Within the 20 member towns of our water district, we own and operate a public water system, which includes 10 active reservoirs, 4 surface water treatment plants and 7 ground water treatment plants.*

The South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (SCCRWA) appreciates the opportunity to express our full support to the Commerce Committee on SB 121, An Act Concerning the Provision of Development Services to Regional Economic Development Districts and the Authority to Pursue Economic Development Strategies, with a suggested change.

SCCRWA believes this bill will be a benefit to the Greater New Haven area and its residents. Helping communities come together to address their needs regionally and collaboratively is an efficient use of state resources. Regionally focused economic development efforts will take advantage of locally-identified strengths to create jobs and help businesses expand.

Assisting regional economic development districts with funding and other support and allowing them to pursue economic development strategies, including authority to contract and receive grants, will have positive ramifications for the community in terms of employment opportunities and tax revenues, easing the burden on residents of the area. Enabling economic development districts, including Regional Economic Xcelleration (REX), to market themselves more effectively will attract businesses and jobs to the area. Job growth may lead to a number of positive long-term effects including lower unemployment, higher labor force participation, higher real estate values and better occupational opportunities.

We also support the change suggested by the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce to revise the bill to make it clear that Economic Development Districts are able to apply for other funding services and pursue initiatives that are already in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) without having to go through DECD for approval.

The South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority believes that SB 121 will promote the standard of living and economic health of the region and we urge the Committee's favorable action.